

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: Student and Educator Support

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education acknowledge that the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) granted renewal of accreditation to Burke Mountain Academy in East Burke, VT, to serve students in grades 8-12?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education acknowledges that the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) granted renewal of accreditation to Burke Mountain Academy in East Burke, VT, to serve students in grades 8-12. This accreditation is through June 30, 2014.

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Burke Mountain Academy is a boarding school providing a full-time college preparatory program and a winter tutorial program for students in grades 8-12, who are involved in competitive skiing.
2. Burke Mountain Academy's accreditation was last acknowledged by the State Board of Education on October 18, 2005 through June 30, 2010.
3. Burke Mountain Academy was granted initial accreditation by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) in December, 1995 and has been continuously accredited since that time. In June of 2010, NEAS&C voted to accept Burke Mountain Academy's Five-Year Interim Evaluation Report. Other than route annual reports, the school's next major responsibility will be a decennial evaluation visit scheduled for 2014.
4. The New England Association of Schools & Colleges is an accrediting agency recognized by the State Board of Education, and listed in rule 7320 of the Board Manual of Rules and Practices.
5. Burke Mountain Academy has a policy on prevention of harassment of students that is as stringent as the Department's model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: None

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Pat Pallas Gray
Education Consultant
828-5414

Mike Mulcahy, Coordinator
Student & Educator Support
828-5108

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: Student & Educator Support

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education acknowledge that the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) has extended the accreditation of Greenwood School in Putney, VT, to include grades 9 and 10?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education acknowledges that the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) has extended the accreditation of Greenwood School in Putney, VT, to include grades 9 and 10. This approval is through October 1, 2011, to coincide with the school's accreditation from the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C).

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing or administration, during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A., §166(b)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Greenwood School is an independent residential and day school, serving male students ages 9-14 upon admission. Within this demographic and with the accreditation extension from NEAS&C, a student can now be admitted at the age of 14 and stay a year or two.
2. Greenwood School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEAS&C) through October 1, 2011. NEAS&C is a recognized accrediting agency by the State Board of Education, per SBE rule 7320. The extension granted by NEAS&C will include the new grades for the first full year of operation and then a substantive change report from the school will be requested, followed by a staff visit. At that time, NEAS&C will decide if further action is needed with regard to the school's accreditation status.
3. Greenwood School was last granted special education approval by the State Board of Education on October 21, 2008, to serve students who are diagnosed with a specific learning disability and/or other health impairment.
4. Greenwood School has the resources necessary, including qualified faculty and support services, to meet the needs of the students in grades 5-10.

5. Greenwood School has a policy on prevention of harassment of students that is as stringent as the Department's model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: None

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Pat Pallas Gray
Independent School Consultant
828-5414

Mike Mulcahy, Coordinator
Student & Educator Support
828-5108

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: Student and Educator Support

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of general and special education independent school approval to The School at the Augmentative Learning and Movement Center with program sites in Morrisville, Enosburg, and Williston, VT to serve male and female students ages 5-22 in grades K-12, with one or more of the following primary disabilities: learning impairment, autism, speech or language impairment, other health impairment, traumatic brain injury, or multiple disabilities, and possibly one or more secondary disabilities including specific learning disability, emotional disturbance, deafness/hard of hearing, or blind/visual impairment?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education grants renewal of general and special education independent school approval to The School at the Augmentative Learning and Movement Center with program sites in Morrisville, Enosburg, and Williston, VT to serve male and female students ages 5-22 in grades K-12, with one or more of the following primary disabilities: learning impairment, autism, speech or language impairment, other health impairment, traumatic brain injury, or multiple disabilities, and possibly one or more secondary disabilities including specific learning disability, emotional disturbance, deafness/hard of hearing, or blind/visual impairment. This approval is for five years, through June 30, 2015.

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)
State Board rule: 2228 et. seq.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. The School at the Augmentative Learning and Movement Center (SALMC) is a day school designed to exclusively serve male and female school-age students, ages 5-22 in grades K-12, with varying types and degrees of physical and cognitive disabilities including learning impairment, autism, pervasive developmental disorders-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS), traumatic brain injury, and multiple disabilities. In addition, SALMC is designed with complex students in mind, such as learning impairment, traumatic brain injury or autism in conjunction with any of the following: behavior difficulties, visual impairment, deaf/hard of hearing, speech and language impairment, and orthopedic impairment. SALMC provides

augmentative education in the domains of life and social skills, and physical, recreational and therapeutic services for children through a collaborative approach that integrates educational and related services into a comprehensive program. The school can serve a maximum of six students in Morrisville, six students in Enosburg, and seven students in Williston.

2. The program in Morrisville is located in a Victorian-style house. The downstairs area consists of a kitchen, a large meeting/eating space, two classrooms, an exercise room, and laundry facilities. Upstairs there are four classrooms and an office. The first floor of the building is handicapped accessible. The facility meets all state and federal health and safety regulations. The house is located beside a playground/recreational area, which is also used by the school. The building was inspected by the Division of Fire Safety, and a copy of the certificate of occupancy issued is on file at the department.

The program in Enosburg is housed in a two-story wood-framed building with an attached separate apartment. The downstairs consists of a kitchen/dining area, and areas to be used for learning spaces. On the second floor there are three rooms that are utilized for additional learning spaces and an administrative office. The building was inspected by the Division of Fire Safety, and a copy of the certificate of occupancy issued is on file at the department.

The program in Williston is located in a bi-level office building, with SALMC located on the handicapped accessible bottom floor. The building has two instructional areas, a gross motor/group room, an exercise/breakroom, a kitchen/dining areas that can be used for groups, and office space. The building was inspected by the Division of Fire Safety, and a copy of the certificate of occupancy issued is on file at the department.

3. The minimum course of study, as prescribed in 16 V.S.A. §906, is provided and adapted to meet the age and individual needs/abilities of the students. The basis of the curriculum is functional academics, concentrating on skills needed in real-life social, personal, and vocational situations. The objectives within the curriculum are meant to be flexible in order to meet the skill levels, learning styles, and time for mastery of each student. Students also receive intensive one-to-one instruction in life skills and job skills education. The teaching methodologies, evaluation procedures, and other special services utilized through the programs are designed to meet the unique educational needs of the school's population. The students at all three sites are provided with opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers in the community.
4. The Morrisville Program is staffed by a Lead Teacher and seven instructors (teacher assistant). The Enosburg Program is staffed by a Lead Teacher and six instructors (teacher assistant). The Williston Program is staffed by a full-time teacher, teacher/instructor, and six instructors (teacher assistant). The three programs share a school director, licensed special educator, a related services coordinator, clinical coordinator/behaviorist, occupational therapist, speech language pathologist, clinical behaviorist, and an outreach director, who is licensed as a special educator and as a director of special education. The staff is qualified by degree for their positions. There is a program of professional development in place for the staff.
5. The student health, attendance, and assessment records were reviewed. The school holds monthly fire drills. The school maintains an operating schedule that includes a total number of instructional hours each year substantially equivalent to that of a public school serving the same grades.

6. SALMC has submitted a financial statement outlining the resources and financial capacity the school has to carry out its educational purposes for the period of approval.
7. SALMC has developed policies for admissions and significant change in placement. The discipline policy is based on individual student behavior plans, not a school-wide policy. The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is part of the school’s philosophy and each student’s placement is based on individual needs for a LRE.
8. SALMC coordinates and communicates with Local Education Agencies through planning and participating in IEP development and implementation, participation in evaluations, and planning and developing programs accommodations called for in students’ IEPs.
9. SALMC implements policies and procedures around confidentiality, maintaining educational records, and prior notice requirements for changes in a student’s placement or program.
10. SALMC has a policy on prevention of harassment of students that is as stringent as the Department’s model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: None

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Pat Pallas Gray
Independent School Consultant
828-5414

Mike Mulcahy, Coordinator
Student & Educator Support
828-5108

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: Student and Educator Support

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of general and special education independent school approval, to serve a maximum of 40 students in grades 2-12, in the disability categories of Specific Learning Disabilities, Other Health Impairment, Learning Impairment, and Emotional Disabilities to Cornerstone School, St. Johnsbury, VT?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education grant renewal of general and special education independent school approval, to serve a maximum of 40 students in grades 2-12, in the disability categories of Specific Learning Disabilities, Other Health Impairment, Learning Impairment, and Emotional Disabilities to Cornerstone School, St. Johnsbury, VT. This approval is for five years, through June 30, 2015.

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)
State Board Rule: 2228 et.seq.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Cornerstone School is an independent, non-profit day facility providing educational, therapeutic, and reintegration services for up to 40 male and female students in grades 2-12. Accepted students are in need of specialized services in a self-contained classroom due to academic and emotional difficulties which interfere with their ability to function in the traditional school environment. Cornerstone serves students with emotional disabilities, learning impairment, specific learning disabilities, and other health impairment. The mission of the school is to build a safe trusting, and responsible community in which students are encouraged to take risks, rise to challenges, fulfill expectations and support each other. Cornerstone School is operated by Northeastern Family Institute of Vermont, Inc. in conjunction with Northeast Kingdom Human Services.
2. Cornerstone School was last granted approval by the State Board of Education on February 21, 2006 through June 30, 2009.
3. Cornerstone School was visited on behalf of the Commissioner by Joan Larsen and Pat Pallas Gray on April 29, 2010.

4. Cornerstone School is housed in the former Portland Street School, a retired neighborhood elementary school, in St. Johnsbury. The facility includes six classrooms, one study room, three self-care rooms, a library, two lounges w/kitchen areas, administrative offices, and a school store. Yard space borders the building of all sides. The building has undergone renovations to meet local, state, and federal health and safety regulations, and is adequate to meet the needs of the students. Additional facilities used are: St. Johnsbury Anthaeum, Old Mill Fitness Club, Burke Mountain, St. Johnsbury Recreation Department, and Lyndon State College.
5. The minimum course of study, as prescribed in V.S.A. §906, is provided and adapted to the learning style, age, and abilities of the students. Cornerstone School provides instruction to students in four, multi-level classroom settings. The school has support services, including library and guidance services, to meet its educational goals. The school also designs individual treatment plans to meet specific students and/or family needs. These include individual, family, and group therapy; vocational programs; psychiatric and psychological services; & substance abuse assessment. The behavior management system is a level system that links greater competence with greater freedom, responsibilities, and recreational activities. During the summer, Cornerstone School collaborates with both the JOBS Program and the Vermont Department of Labor to assist students in obtaining employment. At the time of the visit there were 33 students enrolled.
6. The staff includes an elementary classroom teacher, a middle school teacher, three subject area teachers for language arts, math/science, and social studies, three classroom counselors, three behavior interventionists, and two Northeast Kingdom Human Service case managers. The staff is supported by a Program Director, a licensed special educator, and the Northeast Family Institute's (NFI) Regional Director. The staff is qualified by degree for their positions. There is a program of professional development in place for the staff.
7. The student health, attendance, and assessment records were reviewed. The school holds monthly fire drills. The school maintains an operating schedule that includes a total number of instructional hours each year substantially equivalent to that of a public school serving the same grades.
8. Cornerstone has submitted a financial statement outlining the resources and financial capacity the school has to carry out its educational purposes for the period of approval.
9. Special education policies and procedures were reviewed. Sending school districts are included in the admissions procedure. Discipline and least restrictive environment policies are in compliance with federal and state regulations. Graduation requirements are the same for all students unless stated otherwise in a student's IEP.
10. Cornerstone coordinates and communicates with Local Education Agencies through planning and participating in IEP development and implementation, participation in evaluations, and planning and developing programs accommodations called for in students' IEPs.
11. Cornerstone implements policies and procedures around confidentiality, maintaining educational records, and prior notice requirements for changes in a student's placement or program.

12. Cornerstone School has a policy on prevention of harassment of students that is as stringent as the Department’s model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: None

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Pat Pallas Gray
Independent School Consultant
828-5414

Mike Mulcahy, Coordinator
Educator & Student Support
828-5108

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: Student & Educator Support

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of general and special education year-round independent school approval to serve a maximum of 10 residential and 12 day female students, ages 12-21 in grades 6-12, with the primary disability of Emotional Disturbance and one or more secondary disabilities including Learning Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Speech or Language Impairment and Orthopedic Impairment, to Easter Seals School in Rutland, Vermont?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Board of Education grants renewal of general and special education year-round independent school approval to serve a maximum of 10 residential and 12 day female students, ages 12-21 in grades 6-12, with the primary disability of Emotional Disturbance and one or more secondary disabilities including Learning Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Speech or Language Impairment and Orthopedic Impairment, to Easter Seals School in Rutland, Vermont. This approval is for five years, through June 30, 2015.

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. Section 166(b)
Special Education Rule 2228 et. seq.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Easter Seals School is a year-round residential and day school designed to provide academic, social, behavioral, and therapeutic services to female students ages 12-21, in grades 6-12, with the primary disability of Emotional Disturbance and one or more secondary disabilities including Learning Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Speech or Language Impairment, and Orthopedic Impairment. This intensive residential and educational treatment facility is focused on enhancing independent living skills for students who typically have an IQ of 60-90, have a mental illness diagnosis, have intensive emotional and behavioral needs, and are receiving special education services. The goal is to assist the young adults in achieving developmental stability and achieve behavioral changes in a safe, structured, and supportive environment. The residence is licensed by the Department for Children & Families (DCF) to serve a maximum of ten females who are 15 to 21 years of age. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Maine and New York State Offices and Departments of Education certify the program. The school can serve a maximum of twelve female day students, who are 12-21

years of age. Easter Seals School is administrated by Easter Seals, a national non-profit organization.

2. Easter Seals School was granted renewal of general and special education approval by the State Board of Education on October 21, 2003 through June 30, 2008. A subsequent amendment in November of 2005 enabled the program to add an intensive training program focused on life skills.
3. On behalf of the Commissioner, Joan Larsen and Pat Pallas Gray visited Easter Seals School on April 6, 2010.
4. Easter Seals School has two locations. The residential facility is in a house located in a residential neighborhood in Rutland with a large backyard for outdoor activities. The school building is located in another part of Rutland approximately two miles from the residence. Both facilities are locked and secure at all times. The residential facility includes a large classroom, kitchen facilities, office space, and bedroom/living space. The school facility includes a large classroom, a quiet room, a kitchen, meeting rooms and a library. A heated garage area is used for working with hands-on projects. Female day students will only be served at the school facility. Both facilities meet all applicable state and federal requirements, are handicapped accessible, and are adequate to meet the needs of the program.
5. The minimum course of study, as prescribed in 16 V.S.A. Section 906, is provided and adapted to meet the age and abilities of the students. Easter Seals School curriculum presents general curriculum to all students with an added component of functional life skills. Every program participant is given a needs assessment test to determine what areas in independent living they need to strengthen; one of the subcategories of this assessment is pre-vocational skills. Credits earned at Easter Seals School are sent to sending school districts to count toward completion of a student's graduation requirements. Support services at the school include a small library, community activities and a kitchen, where students help prepare meals. A clinical/case management supervisor, independent living manager, and resident & shift supervisors support the students in the residential facility. There were four students enrolled on the day of the visit.
6. The Easter Seals School staff includes two teachers, one of whom is licensed in special education; and a teacher assistant. The staff at Easter Seals is overseen by the Director of Residential & Education Services. The Easter Seals' Vice President of Residential Services is responsible for the Easter Seals residential & education program. A program of professional development is in place for the staff.
7. The Easter Seals School has submitted information about its financial capacity for the period of approval.
8. Student health, attendance, assessment, and special education records were reviewed and found to be in good order. Fire drill records were well kept.
9. The school maintains an operating schedule that includes a total number of instructional hours each year which is not less than that required of a public school serving the same grades. The school operates year-round with students transitioning in and out of the program, as needed.

10. The Easter Seals School has developed policies for admissions, discipline and significant change in placement. The school coordinates and communicates with the sending agencies/schools through planning and participating in IEP development and implementation, participation in evaluations, and/or planning and developing individual program goals and accommodations. The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is a goal for all students, but students must show progress in their behavior and LRE must be earned.
11. Easter Seals School has a policy on prevention of harassment of students that is as stringent as the Department's model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: None

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Pat Pallas Gray
Independent School Consultant
828-5414

Mike Mulcahy, Coordinator
Student & Educator Support
828-5108

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: Student & Educator Support

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education acknowledge that an approved independent school that operated under the name of Valley Ridge Student Center in East Jamaica, VT, closed on June 11, 2010, and is no longer an approved independent school in Vermont?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education acknowledges that an approved independent school that operated under the name of Valley Ridge Student Center in East Jamaica, VT, closed on June 11, 2010, and is no longer an approved independent school in Vermont.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)
State Board Rule: 2228 et. seq.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Valley Ridge Student Center received initial general and special education independent school approval from the State Board of Education on September 17, 2002. The school has been continuously approved by the State Board since that date.
2. The Independent School Office was notified in writing on July 31, 2010 that Valley Ridge Student Center closed on June 11, 2010.

COST IMPLICATIONS: None

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Pat Pallas Gray
Independent School Consultant
828-5414

Mike Mulcahy, Coordinator
Student & Educator Support
828-5108